

# Jazz festival to feature SNL saxophonist

Saxophonist Ron Blake, a 15-year veteran of NBC's "Saturday Night Live" band, will be the guest artist at the 23rd annual Holyoke Community College Jazz Festival tomorrow and Saturday.

The two-day festival opens tomorrow with an 8 p.m. concert that will feature Blake playing with the Amherst Jazz Orchestra under the direction of David Sporny on the stage of the Leslie Phillips Theater in the HCC Fine & Performing Arts building.

Blake is a professor of saxophone and jazz studies at the Juilliard School of Music and member of the Saturday Night Live band. He has performed and recorded with the Grammy-winning Christian McBride Big Band, Roy Hargrove, Art Farmer, Spirit Music Jamia, Red, Hot + Riot, and the Grammy-nominated, Latin pop group Yerba Buena. Originally from the Virgin Islands, the New York City resident is also a band leader with three albums and some 50-plus recordings as a side man to his credit.

"Ron is one of the world's leading saxophonists, a great instructor, and a versatile performer," said Robert Ferrier, festival organizer, HCC music professor and jazz guitarist. "He plays baritone sax on Saturday Night Live, but he'll be playing tenor sax with us. It's going to be a lot of fun."

The HCC festival will continue on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the Leslie Phillips Theater with big band and jazz combo performances by high school and HCC jazz students. Jazz clinics, workshops and jam sessions will be held throughout the day in the HCC Recital Hall (FPA building, Room 137).

Blake will conduct two music clinics, one at 11 a.m. and another at 1 p.m.

A concluding concert will be held in the theater Saturday from 4 to 5 p.m., with



Saxophonist Ron Blake, of NBC's "Saturday Night Live" band, will be the guest artist during the 23rd annual Holyoke Community College Jazz Festival this weekend.

## IF YOU GO

**Event:** Holyoke Community College Jazz Festival  
**When:** Tomorrow, 8 p.m. concert; Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Where:** Holyoke Community College campus  
**Cost:** Friday night concert: \$15 (general public), \$10 (senior and non-HCC students) and \$7 for members of the HCC community (students, staff and faculty) with a valid ID; events on Saturday are free. Workshops have nominal registration fees.

**For more information:** Call Robert Ferrier at 413-552-2480 or email [rferrier@hcc.edu](mailto:rferrier@hcc.edu)

Blake performing with a select combination of students representing each of the participating high schools, HCC students and festival faculty.

Tickets for the Friday night concert are \$15 (general public), \$10 (senior and non-HCC students) and \$7 for members of the HCC community (students, staff and faculty) with a valid ID.

All Saturday events are free and open to the public. Individuals who wish to participate in workshops will be charged a nominal registration fee.

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ROBERT FERRIER, FESTIVAL ORGANIZER, MUSIC PROFESSOR AND JAZZ GUITARIST

On Saturday, Gerry's Music in South Hadley will have a display booth showcasing instruments, music and accessories in the lobby outside the Leslie Phillips Theater.

For information, contact Robert Ferrier by telephone at 413-552-2480 or by email at [rferrier@hcc.edu](mailto:rferrier@hcc.edu).